

Message Text

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60/20

ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 IO-13 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 OMB-01 SAM-01 /084 W
----- 028593

P R 141459Z JUL 76

FM AMEMBASSY AMMAN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 8530

INFO AMEMBASSY ALGIERS

AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI

USINT BAGHDAD

AMEMBASSY BIERUT

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

AMEMBASSY DOHA

AOMCONSUL JERUSALEM 6523

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MANAMA

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

T/AMEMBASSY MUSCAT 107

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY SANA

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

USCINCEUR/

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

AMEMBASSY TUNIS

C O N F I D E N T I A L AMMAN 3705

C O R R E C T E D C O P Y-PARA 8 CHANGED TO 7

E.O. 11652 GDS

TAGS: PGOV JO

SUBJECT: JORDAN'S NEW CABINET-AN INITIAL ASSESSMENT

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1. SUMMARY: NEW GOVERNMENT REPLACING PRIME MINISTER
RIFAI DOES NOT PRESAGE IMPORTANT FOREIGN POLICY
SHIFT, ALTHOUGH JORDAN MAY BENEFIT OR SUFFER FROM
OTHERS ASSUMPTIONS THAT IT DOES-BENEFIT (SAUDI

ARABIA EGYPT) SUFFERS(SYRIA) RIFAI LIKELY TO
CONTINUE MAJOR FOREIGN POLICY AND SECURITY ADVISORY
ROLE FOR KING ON A FEW SELECTED KEY ISSUES. WITH NEW PRIME MINISTER
BADRAN AND CABINET FOCUSING ON DOMESTIC ISSUES ON WHICH CROWN
PRINCE HASSANS INFLUENCE LIKELY TO INCREASE. LOCAL
REACTION TO CHANGES NOT YET CRYSTALIZED BUT INITIALLY
THERE IS SOME GENERAL COMMENT THAT NEW PM NOT
MUCH MORE OF AN ASST BANKER THAN RIFAI COMBINED WITH
CONCERNED CURIOUSLY ABOUT WHY PM WHO
EXPERIENCED AND EFFECTIVE IN FOREIGN AFFAIRS REPLACED
AT TIME WHEN MIDDLE EAST ISSUES ARE SO ACTIVE. END SUMMARY

2. SEPTTEL GIVES NAMES AND BIO DATA OF NEW
JORDANIAN CABINET ANNOUNCED EVENING 13 JUL 76 INCLUDING
NEW PRIME MINISTER BADRAN. AS EMBASSY PREVIOUSLY
REPORTED PRIME MINISTER RIFAI HAD BEEN TRYING TO RESIGN
FOR SOME MONTHS PLEADING THAT HEALTH AND FAMILY REASONS
CATCHING UP WITH HIM AFTER LONGEST TENURE
OF ANY JORDANIAN PRIME MINISTER AND
ARGUING THAT IF HE STOPPED DOWN NOW WITH SUCCESSFUL
REPUTATION HE COULD MORE EASILY RETURN TO PRIME
MINISTERSHIP WHENEVER KING HUSSEIN MIGHT NEED HIM LATER
ON. THAT WAS PRECISELY REASON KING HUSSEIN USED
IN EXPLAINING CABINET CHANGES TO US PRIVATELY
AND IN ART TO PUBLIC.

3. THERE ARE LIKELY TO BE ASSUMPTIONS IN JORDAN AND
ABROAD THAT REPLACEMENT OF RIFAI IS RELATED TO A DECISION BY
KING TO PULL BACK FROM RIFAI'S SOMEWHAT MORE RISK TAKING
AND ADVENTURIST FOREIGN POLICY ESPECIALLY WITH REGARD
TO SYRIAN RAPPROCHMENT AND IMPROVED SOVIET TIES. THOSE
ASSUMPTIONS ALMOST CERTAINLY WILL GROW IF SAUDI FINANCED
HAWK MISSILE DEAL RE EMERGES AS POSSIBILITY FOLLOWING
KING HUSSEIN'S AND RIFAI'S RECENT VISIT TO SOVIET UNION
AND LATER TO JEDDAH TO DISCUSS AIR DEFENSE. MANY WILL ASSUME RIFAI'S
OUSTER WAS PRICE OF NEW FINANCING BY SAUDIS
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WHO ARE KNOWN TO HAVE HAD RESERVATIONS ABOUT RIFAI'S
PERSONAL STYLE AND FOREIGN POLICY HE ESPOUSED OF CLOSER
TIES WITH SYRIA.

4. EMBASSY DOES NOT BELIEVE THOSE CONSIDERATIONS
WEIGHTED TO SIGNIFICANTLY IN KING HUSSEIN'S DECISION TO
ACCEPT RIFAI'S RESIGNATION. HOWEVER KING PROBABLY
REALIZES JORDAN WOULD BENEFIT FROM OPPOSITE (EVEN IF FALSE)
CONCLUSION BEING DRAWN IN RIYADH. FURTHERMORE REPLACEMENT
OF RIFAI COULD PROVIDE OPPORTUNITY FOR THAW IN GOJ
EGYPTIAN RELATIONS KING HUSSEIN IS KNOWN TO HAVE
RESENTED THE WAY JORDAN WAS NOT FULLY INFORMED ABOUT
RECENT EGYPTIAN SYRIAN MEETING IN RIYADH AND HOLDS
SYRIA RESPONSIBLE. KING THUS MAY WELCOME CHANCE TO PUT

MORE BALANCE BACK INTO JORDANS REGIONAL POSTURE. AT SAME TIME WE BELIEVE KING HUSSEIN PROBABLY INTENDS QUETLY TO MAINTAIN AND PERHAPS SLOWLY FURTHER TO STRENGTHEN TIES WITH ASAD'S SYRIA FOR VARIETY OF REASONS OF IMPORTANCE TO JORDAN WHICH EMBASSY HAS DISCUSSED IN PREVIOUS REPORTING. RAPPROCHMENT WITH SYRIA WAS HIGHLIGHTED AMONG ITMES OF CONTINUITY THAT KING SAID WOULD BE PART OF THE GOALS OF NEW GOVERNMENT UNDER PRIME MINISTER BADRAN.

5. MAJOR RESULT OF CABINET CHANGES WILL BE SHIFT IN WHERE AND HOW POLICY IS MADE. CLEARLY FOREIGN POLICY WILL BE EVEN MORE THAN EVER CENTERED IN THE PALACE AND FORMER PRIME MINISTER RIFAI WILL CONTINUE TO PLAY IMPORTANT BEHIND THE SCENES ROLE IN HIS POSTION AS SPECIAL ADVISOER AND REPRESENTATIVE OF THE KING. PALACE'S FOREIGN POLICY STABLE FURTHER STRENGTHENED WITH ADDITION OF FORMER LONG TERM UNPERFREP SHARAF AS CHIEF OF ROYAL COURT. SHARAF WILL BRING IMPRESSIVE FOREIGN POLCY EXPERIENCE, INTELLIGENCE REPUTATION AND AMBITION FOR PRIME MINISTERSHIP TO HIS NEW JOB BUT ALTHOUGH COUSIN OF KING HE IS LIKELY CLEAR LY TO COME OFF SECOND BEST TO RIFAI IN ANY COMPETITION FOR EAR OF KING SHAF IS ALSO KNOWN TO BE CLOSE TO CROWN PRINCE DOMESTIC AFFAIRS (NEVER RIFAI'S STROG POINT) MAY BE LEFT FOR THE MOST PART TO BE RUN BY CABINET WHICH HAS ACQUIRED SOMEWHAT IMAGE OF APOLITICAL TECHNOCRATS WITHOUT CONFIDENTIAL

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IMPORTANT CONSTITUENCIES OF THEIR OWN. NEW PM CERTAINLY DOES NOT HAVE COMBATIVENESS FOR POWER AND INSTICSTS FOR BUREAUCRATIC INFLIGHTING OF RIFAI. CROWN PRINCE HASSAN (RIFAI'S CHIEF VICTIM IN PAST POWER FIGHTS) IS LIKELY TO EMERGE WITH GREATER INFLUENCE IN DOMSTIC MATTERS ESPECIALLLY THOSE HAVING TO DO WITH ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT. SECERAL NEW MINISTERS QASEM,MO ASHER, SHARAF, ODEH--HAVE HAD CLOSE TIES WITH THE CROWN PRINCE IN THE PAST THEREBY GIVING HIM SPECIAL CHANNELS OF COMMUNICATION AND INFLUENCE IN THE NEW CABINET.

6. ASIDE FROM EDITORIALS (FIBS JN 140748Y 14 JUN) WHICH EXPECTEDLY APPROVE CHANGES AND WISH NEW CABINET WELL LOCAL REACTION HAS NOT HAD TIME TO ABSORB NEWS WHICH CAME OUT SUDDENLY. THERE IS SOME INITIAL CARPING FROM EAST BANKERS ABOUT BADRAN (WHO WAS BORN IN JARRASH(EAST BANK) BUT WHOSE PARENTS ARE FROM WEST BANK TOWN OF NABULUS) BEING NO MORE A "TRUE" JORDANIANS THAN RIFAI, BUT THAT MAY DIMINISH AS BADRAN'S MORE CONSERVATIVE DISPOTION AND LESSER INFLUENCE ON THE KING BECOME MORE APPARENT.

7. US INTEREST DO NOT APPEAR TO BE ADVERSELY AFFECTED
BY CABINET CHANGES AND MAY WELL ENHANCE BY RIFAT'S DIMINISHED
FOREIGN POLICY .IN HIS LETTER TO BADRAN
ASKING HIM TO FORM NEW GOVERNMENT, KING HUSSEIN EMPHASIZED THE
CONTINUITY OF JORDAN'S INTERESTS AND ITS FOREIGN POLICY.
PICKERING

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To: STATE INFO ALGIERS
ABU DHABI
BAGHDAD
BIERUT
CAIRO
DAMASCUS

DOHA
AOMCONSUL JERUSALEM
JIDDA
KUWAIT
LONDON
MANAMA
MOSCOW
MUSCAT
PARIS
SANA
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TEL AVIV
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